

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently amended) A closing plug for receipt by a threaded flange that is assembled into a drum end, said closing plug comprising:  
a threaded body for receipt by said threaded flange;  
a radial flange arranged adjacent a first end of said threaded body; and  
a plurality of spaced-apart axially-protruding projections extending from an outer portion of said radial flange in the direction of said drum end for limiting the threaded advancement of said plug by abutment of one or more of said plurality of axially-protruding projections against an ~~abutment surface~~ a surface of said drum end.

2. (Original) The closing plug of claim 1 wherein said radial flange has a modified hex shape.

3. (Currently amended) The closing plug of claim 2 wherein said plurality of axially-protruding projections ~~includes six spaced-apart~~ totals six equally-spaced projections.

4. (Original) The closing plug of claim 3 wherein each axially-protruding projection is of unitary construction with said radial flange.

5. (Currently amended) The closing plug of claim 4 having a longitudinal axis and wherein each axially-protruding projection has a substantially flat lower ~~edge surface that is~~ substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) The closing plug of claim 1 wherein said plurality of axially-protruding projections ~~includes six spaced-apart~~ totals six equally-spaced projections.

8. (Original) The closing plug of claim 1 wherein each axially-protruding projection is of unitary construction with said radial flange.

Amendment Response  
Serial No. 10/602,905      Group Art Unit 3727  
Atty. Docket No. 1104-750/RKE-075  
Page 3 of 12

9. (Currently amended) The closing plug of claim 1 having a longitudinal axis and wherein each axially-protruding projection has a substantially flat lower edge surface that is substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis.

10. (canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A drum closure for a drum end comprising:  
a threaded flange constructed and arranged for assembly into said drum end;  
a closing plug constructed and arranged for receipt by said threaded flange, said closing plug having a threaded body ~~[[and]]~~ a radial flange arranged adjacent a first end of said threaded body and;  
a plurality of spaced-apart, axially-protruding projections extending from an outer portion of said radial flange in the direction of said drum end for limiting the threaded advancement of said plug by abutment of one or more of said plurality of axially-protruding projections against a surface of said drum end; and  
a sealing gasket positioned around said threaded body and being constructed and arranged for sealing between said radial flange and said drum end. ; and  
~~abutment means for limiting the threaded advancement of said closing plug into said threaded flange.~~

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended) The drum closure of claim ~~[[12]]~~ 11 wherein each of said plurality of axially-protruding projections has an axial length such that contact against ~~an abutment surface~~ said drum end occurs after said closing plug is tightened into said threaded flange to a desired torque for proper sealing gasket compression.

14. (Original) The drum closure of claim 13 wherein said radial flange has a modified hex shape.

Amendment Response  
Serial No. 10/602,905      Group Art Unit 3727  
Atty. Docket No. 1104-750/RKE-075  
Page 4 of 12

15. (Currently amended) The drum closure of claim 14 wherein said plurality of axially-protruding projections ~~includes six spaced apart~~ totals six equally-spaced projections.

16. (Original) The drum closure of claim 15 wherein each axially-protruding projection is of unitary construction with said radial flange.

17. (Currently amended) The drum closure of claim 16 having a longitudinal axis and wherein each axially-protruding projection has a substantially flat lower edge surface that is substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis.

18. (Original) The drum closure of claim 11 wherein said radial flange has a modified hex shape.

19-27 (canceled)

28. (Withdrawn) A method of fabricating a closing plug with a structure for enclosing a sealing gasket, said closing plug being constructed and arranged for receipt by a threaded flange that is assembled into a drum end, said method comprising the following steps:

providing a closing plug having a threaded body and a radial flange arranged adjacent a first end of said threaded body;

configuring said radial flange with a plurality of formable flange portions; and

bending an outer section of each flange portion into an axially-protruding projection extending from said radial flange wherein said axially-protruding projections are constructed and arranged to enclose a sealing gasket positioned around said threaded body radially inwardly of said axially-protruding projections.

Amendment Response

Serial No. 10/602,905      Group Art Unit 3727

Atty. Docket No. 1104-750/RKE-075

Page 5 of 12